

APPLICATION NUMBER: 22/01434/FUL

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DELEGATED DECISION CHECKLIST AND REPORT

APPLICATION NO.	CASE OFFICER	DATE
22/01434/FUL	Aimee Bovaird	16 March 2023

Address: St Chads House, 32 Church Stile, Rochdale, OL16 1QE

Proposal: Change of use and conversion of office building into 4 flats including alterations to fenestration on all elevations including two new entrance doors on rear elevation, two external access ramps and installation of solar panels to roof

PUBLICITY	Weekly list expired?	Y	Site notice expired?	N/A
	Neighbour letters expired?	Y	Press Notice expired?	N/A

DELEGATION	Significant departure from local plan?	N	Contrary to national policy?	N
	Applicant a Council Member or officer?	N	Contrary to previous decision?	N
	Major with 10 or more objections and recommending approval?	N	Called in or Planning Panel objection?	N

COMMENTS	Planning Panel comments received?	N
	Neighbour comments received?	N

EIA	Screening opinion completed and saved to Onbase?	N
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CONDITIONS	Pre-commencement conditions proposed?	N
	Pre-commencement conditions agreed (or notification period expired)?	N/A

RECOMMENDATION	APPROVE subject to conditions
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CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY: LA

DATE: 29.03.2023

SITE

This site is located at St Chads House, 32 Church Stile, which is a two storey office building with a car park to the rear which is accessed off Great George Street. Directly to the rear of the site is another similar two storey building used as by Petrus as a homeless shelter. Opposite the site to the west is a large area of public open space. The area is mixed residential commercial in character. The site is located within the Defined Urban Area.

PROPOSAL

The application proposes the change of use and conversion of an office building into 4 flats including alterations to fenestration on all elevations including two new entrance doors on rear elevation, two external access ramps and installation of solar panels to roof.

Each flat will contain one bedroom, kitchen/living room and a bathroom. Flat 1 and 2 will have accessible bathrooms and a utility room.

The application proposes alterations to all fenestrations, on the north elevation an additional two ground floor windows are proposed. On the west elevation all windows are being replace and enlarged, one window is being removed. On the south elevation the two existing windows are being enlarged and an additional four windows are being added.

On the east elevation eight existing windows are being replaced with four windows. One of the existing two doors is remaining and an additional two doors are being added. Two ramps are also being added to help improve accessibility. Solar panels are proposed on the west and east roof elevation.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

Rochdale Core Strategy:

SD1	Delivering sustainable development
DM1	General Development requirements
SO1	Delivering a more prosperous economy
SO2	Creating successful and healthy communities
C1	Delivering the right amount of housing in the right places
C3	Delivering the right type of housing
SO3	Improving design, image and quality of place
P3	Improving design of new development
SO4	Promoting a Greener Environment
G8	Managing water resources and flood risk
G9	Reducing the impact of pollution, contamination and land instability
SO5	Improving accessibility and delivering sustainable transport
T2	Improving accessibility

Unitary Development Plan (UDP):
G/D/1 Defined Urban Area

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):
Supplementary Planning Guidance note 'Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development' (June 2016).

RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

90/D25709 – Two Storey Office Development and Two Storey Day Centre For Homeless People – Approved

91/D26859 - Two Storey Office Development and Two Storey Day Centre For Homeless People. – Approved

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Highways And Engineering

The following response has been received:

"We have considered traffic generation for the existing use against the proposed use and although traffic patterns may be different during certain times of the day we do not envisage any detrimental impact on highway capacity.

The application does include some parking provision and the development site is close to the town centre so it is within a sustainable location with good access to local amenities and public transport, therefore parking should not be an issue.

The site is already being serviced and proposals include a bin store which is easily accessible there we raise no concerns over servicing.

If approved the development should not have any impact on road safety.

Highways raise no objection to this application and request no specific planning conditions."

Env Health - Noise/Odours

This section has no objections to the proposals.

Strategic Housing - HMO

No comments received.

REPRESENTATIONS

Letters of notification were sent to all surrounding properties, no representations have been made.

ANALYSIS

Principle of Development

The application proposes the conversion of the existing building into four new flats, in a location within the Defined Urban Area. Policy guides new development, wherever possible and appropriate, to the urban area in order to support urban regeneration and to protect the countryside. The site is located in a mixed commercial and residential area. Policy C1 of the adopted Core Strategy seeks to maximise the potential of previously developed sites, including empty homes and buildings.

Additionally, the policy seeks to ensure that sites are sustainable with good access to local services, facilities, green infrastructure, shops, jobs, schools and public transport. Policy C3 of the Core Strategy seeks to provide a range of housing types to meet different needs, and at densities that make efficient use of land.

In light of the above it is considered that the principle of providing residential accommodation is acceptable at the application site. Further material considerations are considered below.

Design and Visual Appearance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments function well and add to the overall quality of the area and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping. This is largely reflected within Policies DM1 and P3 of the Council's adopted Core Strategy, which requires development proposals to demonstrate high quality design.

The proposed alterations to the fenestration of the building will not overhaul the character and appearance of the building. The windows will be changed on all elevations, and on balance this will not affect the visual amenity of the overall building.

Solar panels are proposed on the roof and it is considered that these will not appear obtrusive or negatively affect the surrounding character of the area. They may be visible from the highway, however their visual impact is considered minimal.

Amenity

Core Strategy policy DM1 requires all development proposals to demonstrate that they will not have a negative impact upon the amenity of future residents and occupiers. Policy G9 requires that sensitive new developments such as housing are not adversely affected by existing sources of pollution, including noise, from certain types of industry. Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework advises that planning decisions should result in places with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users.

Noise and Disturbance

The area is mixed area comprising predominately residential uses with some commercial uses. A homeless centre is located to the rear of the site. The proposal would be in keeping with the existing land uses. Therefore the proposed use is considered appropriate in this location and that its occupiers are not likely to experience undue noise disturbance from neighbouring uses or vice versa. No objections have been raised by the Environmental Health Officer.

Occupier Amenity

The Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) is a technical standards document produced by the Government to ensure internal space within new dwellings is suitable for application across all tenures.

Flats 1 to 4 have one bedroom and would all be have the potential to be considered a 2 person flat, based on the minimum standards set out in the NDSS, it would need to be a minimum of 50sqm. Flat 1 is 47sqm, Flat 2 is 45sqm, Flat 3 is 48sqm Flat 4 is

52sqm. Flat 1-3 do not meet the minimum requirements. If the flats are considered for 1 person they all exceed the minimum requirements.

Whilst the Council has not adopted the Standards within its development plan, it does serve to demonstrate that the proposed development marginally fails to meet the minimum requirements. In this instance it is considered acceptable as they are slightly smaller than the minimum requirements and are not considered to be used as family homes.

There is a small grassed area at the front of the property, and although this may not be sufficient as outdoor amenity space, it does not render the development unacceptable as the unit would not constitute a family dwelling. It is noted that directly opposite the proposed development is an area of open space and Broadfield Park which can provide occupiers with access to pleasant outdoor amenity space.

All habitable rooms across the proposed dwelling are considered to receive adequate natural light and allow for a suitable level of outlook. The site is already serviced by bins and the proposal includes a bin store at the rear of the site.

On balance this proposal is considered acceptable in this instance as it would not unduly impact on the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties and would provide an acceptable level of amenity for future occupiers in accordance with policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy, the SPD and the NPPF.

Neighbour amenity / Minimum Distance Standards

The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document '*Guidelines and Standards for Residential Development 2016 (SPD)*' contains a number of guidelines and requirements for the design and layout of new housing in order to preserve the amenity standards for surrounding residents. Paragraph 4.1 of the SPD recommends that a minimum separation distance of 21 metres should be provided between principal elevations of opposing dwellings and a distance of 14 metres between principal and secondary elevations. Where these separation distances cannot be achieved proposals should be 'compatible with the density and character of surrounding development.'

There is a slight shortfall in the separation distance with the building opposite to the rear. However this would not warrant refusal of the application as the proposed use is unlikely to be a much greater impact (in terms of overlooking) than the current office use of the building. In terms of outlook, the rooms facing the building to the rear are served by more than one window, meaning that they will enjoy good levels of light and outlook, despite a slight shortfall in separation distance. It is noted the kitchen / living room in flat 3 will look towards the building to the rear however there are also two other windows in this room. The bedroom in flat 4 will also look out to the rear but again this bedroom will also have a secondary window.

On balance, the proposed development is acceptable in regards to neighbour and occupier amenity.

Highway Safety

With any application for new development it is important to assess the impact on highway safety and under policy T2 of the adopted Core Strategy it is established that 'In all circumstances, the safety, accessibility and amenity of those who live or have business in the area will have priority, while providing reliable journey times for those travelling through'. Whilst Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that 'development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an

unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe'.

The Council's Highways department have been consulted as part of the application and they raise no objections with the proposal.

Given the above, the application would be acceptable and would accord with policies T1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve with conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

1. The development must be begun not later than three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason. Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. This permission relates to the following plans:
 - Location Plan AG22/0198 Rev B
 - Proposed Site Plan AG22/0397 Drawing Number 03 Rev A
 - Proposed and Existing Elevations AG22/0198
 - Proposed and Existing Floor Plans AG22/0198 Drawing Number 02 Rev A
 - Solar Panel Locations and Sections Drawing Number 04 Rev A

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure a satisfactory standard of development in accordance with the policies contained within the saved Rochdale Unitary Development Plan, the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Prior to occupation of any flat hereby approved, details of the proposed bin store (location and design) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The bin store shall be installed in accordance with the approved details before any flat is occupied and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and highway safety and in compliance with policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any equivalent Order following the amendment, re-enactment or revocation thereof) prior to first occupation of the building hereby permitted the windows in bathroom Flat 1 on the ground floor elevation facing north, the bathroom in Flat 2 on the ground floor elevation facing south, the bathroom in Flat 3 on the first floor elevation facing east and the bathroom in flat 4 on the first floor elevation facing east shall be fitted with, to a height of no less than 1.7m above finished floor level, textured glass which obscuration level is no less than Level 3 of the Pilkington Glass scale (or equivalent) and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of amenity and in compliance with policy DM1 of the adopted Rochdale Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Procedure Statement

The proposal complies with the development plan and would improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. It therefore comprises sustainable development and the Local Planning Authority worked proactively to issue the decision without delay.

Report Author Aimee Bovaird